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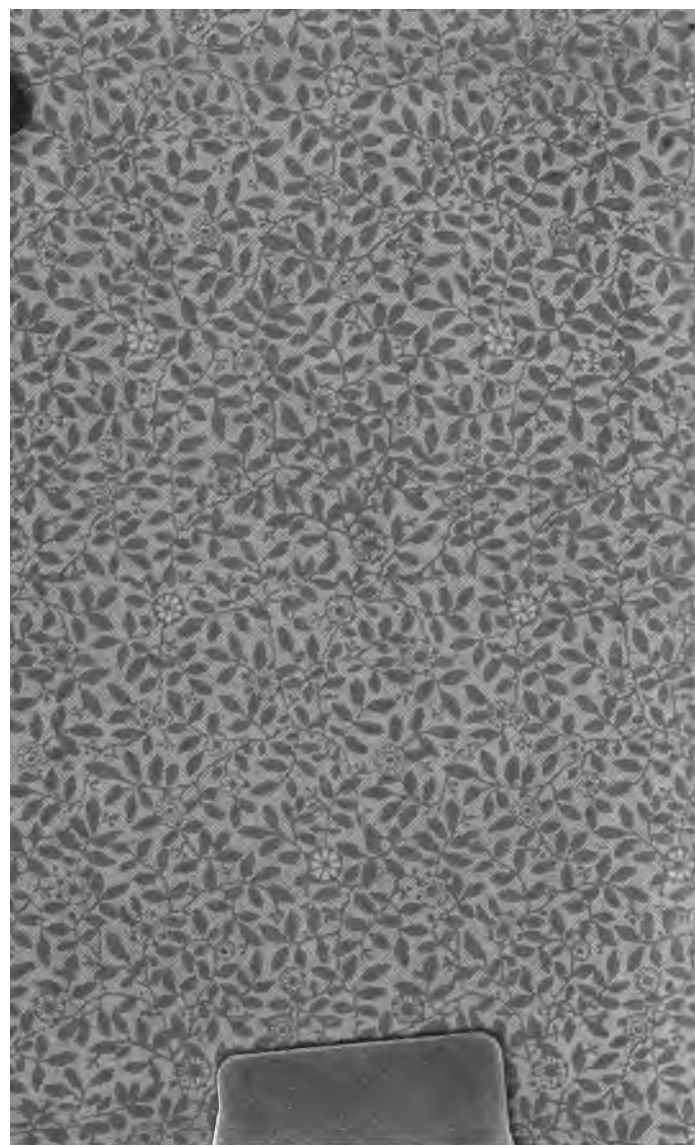
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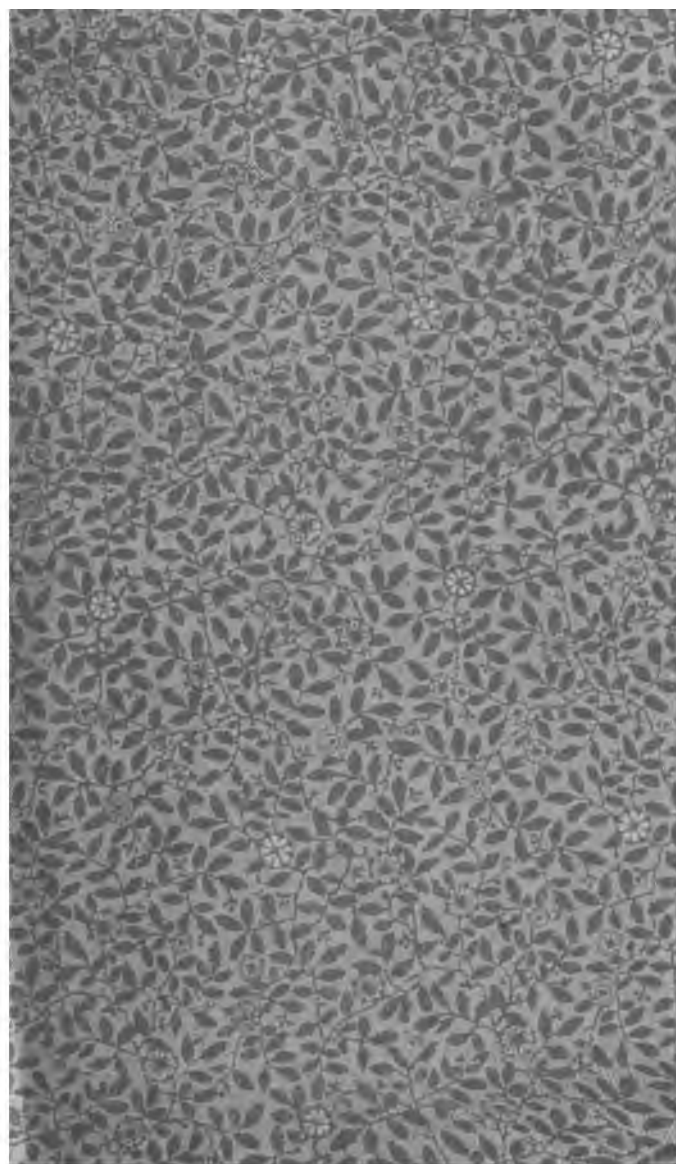
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*THE GREAT EXAMPLE*

*W. FRANK SHAW*







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*THE GREAT EXAMPLE.*



# The Great Example.

SIX LENTEN SERMONS

UPON

OUR BLESSED LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS  
CHRIST CONSIDERED AS OUR  
EXAMPLE.

BY

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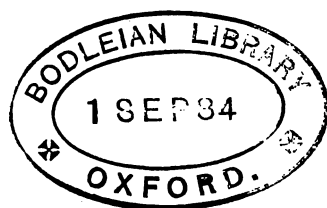
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TO THE  
REV. JOHN WORTHINGTON BLISS, B.A.,  
RECTOR OF BETTESHANGER WITH HAM,  
AND  
RURAL DEAN OF SANDWICH,

**these Sermons**

ORIGINALLY PREACHED IN HIS CHURCH, AT HIS REQUEST,  
ARE INSCRIBED  
IN GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGMENT  
OF MANY KINDNESSES,  
AND IN AFFECTIONATE REMEMBRANCE  
OF THE BLESSING  
OF HIS HEARTY COUNSEL AND EXAMPLE.

*Eastry, 17th Jan., 1884.*



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# The Great Example.

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**Our Blessed Lord as our Example in Self-Sacrifice.**

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HEB. x. 9.

“Lo, I come to do Thy Will, O God.”

ON Sunday last (Quinquagesima) we heard our dear Lord saying to His disciples in the Holy Gospel, “Behold we go up to Jerusalem.” And that is simply just what the Church is doing at this season of Lent. She bids her children to come apart into the wilderness to watch and fast with Christ ; and then she makes her yearly pilgrimage to the earthly Jerusalem, where our Blessed Lord suffered for us men for our salvation, and in heart and thought leads us up to Calvary all along the way that He once trod, His way of sorrows, the King’s Highway of the Cross. Let us also go, that we may die with Him to the world, to sin, to self. And as our Blessed Lord hath left us an example that we should follow in His steps, let us now during the next few Sunday evenings follow Him along His path of suffering and sorrow, and fix our gaze attentively on Him as our Great Example in Self-

Sacrifice, in Love, in Obedience, in Patience, in Work, and in Death. So shall we learn at once how to live, and how to die,—to live unto God, and to die in the Lord.

Behold the Man ! What Man ? The Man, Christ JESUS, the Man that is God's Fellow, the Man that has become as one of us to know good and evil, and Who is indeed Bone of our bone, and Flesh of our flesh, our ever-adorable Redeemer, Lord, and God.

Behold the Man in Self-sacrifice. What do I mean by *self-sacrifice* ? I mean the giving up of our own will and way, our pleasures and desires ; the denying ourselves in lawful things ; the willing and obedient taking up of the cross appointed us by God, for there is a cross in every lot, the crucifying of the flesh with the affections and lusts ; the dying to the world,—the mortifying of that inner world of taste, feeling, habit, desire, imagination, and memory, which is summed up in the one word *self*. And this our Blessed Lord, the second Adam, the one true type and representative of man, did in a marvellous way—tracking out the path for us, and leaving us an example that we should follow in His steps. For what was the whole of His earthly life, from the cradle to the grave, from the manger to the Cross, but one long course of self-sacrifice ? At Bethlehem, in Egypt, at Nazareth, at

Capernaum, in Judea, in Galilee, in Samaria ; in the Temple, in their synagogues ; when passing through the corn-fields, when walking by the way, when sitting in the house ; by the blue lake of Galilee, and on the lone mountain top ; at all times, and under all circumstances, in all places, and amid all company, our Blessed Lord manifested His *self-sacrifice*, not doing His own ways, nor finding His own pleasure, nor speaking His own words, but ever setting the honour and glory of His Father before Him, and striving to do His will in all things.

Thus, when He cometh into the world, He saith, in the words of our text, "*Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God.*" At Jacob's well, when pressed by His disciples to eat of the provisions which they had brought, He declares, "My meat is to do the Will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work ;" at another time He saith, "I came down from Heaven, not to do Mine own Will, but the Will of Him that sent Me ;" in His Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane, He prays. that if it be possible, the cup of bitterness may pass from Him : nevertheless, He straightway adds, "Father, not as I will, but as 'Thou wilt—Thy Will be done' !

"*Lo, I come to do Thy Will, O God.*" See how this motto is, as it were, stamped upon our Blessed Lord's whole earthly life, what time God was manifest in the



Flesh, and the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. What immense and untold Self-sacrifice was involved in the bare fact of God becoming Man at all, of the Creator stooping to become a creature—in His regarding not His equality with the Father as a prize to be seized on, but rather making Himself of no reputation, taking upon Him the form of a servant, even as He said, "I am among you as He that serveth." What should we think if some great earthly king left his throne, his palace, his courtiers, his attendants, his splendour, and his riches, and went off to some distant part of his dominions, to live a hard, obscure life among some wretched, leprous slaves, who mocked and evil entreated him? We should be filled with wonder and amazement at his *self-sacrifice*. And yet, dear brethren, JESUS our Lord hath done more than this for us poor sinners. He left no earthly court, but the palaces of Heaven, the glories and beauties and delights of the City of God—the songs of praise, the worship and adoration of the holy angels, the seat on God's Right Hand. All these He left—all majesty and splendour He laid aside, without a moment's hesitation, out of very love to us ; in order to come down to this poor, cold earth, and live the life of an outcast, to be blasphemed and reviled and evil spoken of, to be despised and rejected of men—yea, those

very men whom He came to help and save.

Those that are delicately brought up do not naturally like to give up the comforts and conveniences to which they have been accustomed ; yet such was His self-sacrifice that JESUS our Lord left all for thee ! Men of refined tastes do not, as a rule, care to mix much with those that are ignorant and rude, unlearned and unrefined ; and yet the Lord of all, the only wise God our Saviour, associated with publicans and sinners, sacrificed His natural tastes as Man, His time, His strength, His retirement, for their good ; became Poor that we might be made rich, and chose as His Apostles a few poor fishermen and carpenters, unlettered and simple folk, unlearned and ignorant men. Again, men who have been their own masters, at perfect liberty to come or go as they please, who have lived a free, unrestrained life, not hampered with many rules, do not generally care to become the servants of others ; they do not like to be cribbed, cabined, and confined within narrow bounds, to have their liberty curtailed, to be obliged to conform to rules and regulations. Think then what it must have been for Him Who is perfect Freedom, and Whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain, to come down to earth, and become as a Man among men, subject to conditions of time and space, confined to the narrow limits of a human

body, passing all His Life on earth in one little corner of the world, in all things made like unto His brethren, and feeling, as they do, hunger, thirst, weariness, exhaustion, faintness, sweat, and suffering. Let us seek to know something of our dear Lord's perfect and entire Self-surrender and Self-sacrifice ; and as we gaze upon Him, our One great Pattern and Example, with love, with faith, with humble teachableness, may we be changed into His image, animated by His spirit, and constrained to follow in His steps, and to re-echo His saying, "*Lo, I come to do Thy Will, O God !*"

And remember that, after all, self-sacrifice is a very plain and homely virtue, which God gives every one of us many daily opportunities to practise, both towards God and towards men. Not a day passes but occasions arise in which we may please ourselves, or sacrifice our pleasure to that of others ; in which we may seek our own profit and advantage, or another's weal ; in which we may try to have our own way, or yield up our will out of regard to the wishes of others. Self is always at home : and true self-sacrifice consists in going out of self, denying self, thwarting it, keeping it under, and bringing it into subjection, and in taking up the Cross daily, and following after Christ wherever He may lead. Self-sacrifice seeketh not her own, looks not on her own things only, but also on the

things of others, and has respect unto their tastes, their wishes, their advantage, and their good. "If we do not let go of ourselves we can never reach Him Who is above us." If we do not sacrifice our tastes, our wishes, our pleasure, and our will, unto the Will of God, the Sacrifice of Christ our Lord upon the Cross, and His entire Self-surrender for the good of man, will profit us nothing. "God does not ask many words, or postures, or external ceremonies; He demands of us a Will wholly given up unto Himself, pliable in His hands, asking nothing and refusing nothing, nor seeking anything under any pretext, save to do His Will."

"I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God," and by the absolute Self-sacrifice of JESUS our Lord, "that ye present your bodies," and all that is within you—taste, feeling, thought, imagination, memory, and will—"a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Remember that God's Will should be the guiding principle, even as God's honour and glory should be the end and object, of our lives. Let us yield up our will wholly and entirely to the Will of God, to be, to go, to do, to suffer, as He sees best, when He pleases, how He pleases, and for as long time as He pleases. Let us pray—

"Thy way, not mine, O Lord,  
However dark it be.

Lead me by Thine own Hand,  
Choose out the path for me.  
Smooth let it be, or rough,  
It will be still the best,  
Winding or straight it leads  
Right onward to Thy rest."

and then

" Leave all things to a Father's Will,  
And taste before Him lying still,  
E'en in affliction, peace."

But this I say to every one of you — try to make this Lent a reality, imitate the Self-sacrifice of JESUS our Lord by practising some self-denial for His sake. And believe me, if you do it as unto the Lord, you will find it profitable, helpful, blessed : for " if we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him." Remember Lent is a great reality. It is a time when " JESUS of Nazareth, our Lord and God, passeth by." It is meant as a time of special preparation for Easter Communion. If you have been irregular in coming unto the Altar of God, or if you have never communicated at all, now is your time. Use this Lent well, and if you are a regular Communicant, you may expect to receive a special blessing at Easter : if you have been negligent and irregular, you may by earnest prayer, by self-denial, and by diligent preparation, be a worthy partaker of the Table of the Lord : or if, in days that are

past, you have unhappily neglected that Holy Communion which is the solemn bounden duty of every Christian man, and also his highest privilege and his greatest joy; yet now if you are waking up to the greatness of your responsibilities, and the blessedness of those helps, sacraments, benedictions, and means of grace, which surround you on either hand, you may make good progress through Lent, and hope soon to be admitted to eat and drink with the King of kings, at His Table; if only you will strive to master and restrain your evil lusts and passions, to conquer pride, to surrender self, and to lay your will at the feet of JESUS, saying—

Teach me to do Thy Will, O God!

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## Our Blessed Lord as our Example in Love.

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EPHES. III. 19.

"To know the Love of Christ which passeth knowledge."

ON Sunday last I tried to point you to our Blessed Lord, the Man Christ JESUS, as the One great Pattern and Example of self-sacrifice. This evening it will be my endeavour to uplift Him here among you as the One True and Perfect Pattern of Love.

Now in the best and purest earthly love there is much of selfishness and imperfection. Other motives mingle with the love of parents for their children, and of children for their parents, so that the pure gold of *Love* becomes mixed with dross. But the Love of JESUS our Lord and God is wholly unalloyed, entirely disinterested, full and free, boundless and eternal. It is the Source, the Spring, the Fountain-head of all true love, which gushes forth pure and fresh and sparkling from the very Being of God, for "God is Love, and he that dwelleth in Love, dwelleth in God, and God in him."

1. *To know the Love of Christ.* But how can mortal man know *that which passeth knowledge*? True no man can find out the Almighty unto perfection no one of us can fully appreciate and understand the length and breadth and depth and height of the Love of JESUS our Lord. Still, if we try to love Him Who first loved us, we shall know somewhat of that His boundless love: for Love sees Love, and Love purges and purifies the mental vision. Moreover S. John, the beloved disciple, who is often called "the Apostle of Love," tells us, "*Hereby* perceive we the Love of God, because He laid down His Life for us!" That Love of Christ our Lord, which, in all its fulness and variety, *passeth knowledge*, may yet be apprehended in part, by what He has done and is now doing.

And first the Love of JESUS our Lord was manifested in His being mindful of man, and in His visiting him in his ruined state. His Love for man brought Christ from Heaven to earth.

"O Love how deep ! how broad ! how high !  
It fills the heart with ecstasy !  
That God, the Son of God should take  
Our mortal form for mortal's sake."

Through Love of man He abhorred not the Virgin's womb ; for verily He took not on Him the nature of

4



Angels, but was made a little lower than the Angels, what time He the Eternal Word was made Flesh and dwelt among us. See how He loved us! Out of pure love to man He took upon Him the form of a Servant and shrank not from poverty, misunderstanding, coldness, unkindness, desertion, and treachery. His love led Him to undergo temptation and trial, toil and weariness, hunger and thirst, loneliness, and apparent want of success, for us men and for our salvation. His long-suffering Love enabled Him to endure the contradiction of sinners against Himself, when they perverted His words, blasphemed His deeds of Love and Mercy by ascribing them to the power of the devil, cast out His Name as evil, plotted against His life, tried to entangle Him in His talk, and marked His steps when they laid wait for His soul. It was Love and Love alone which nerved Him to become a Man of sorrows, to face hunger and cold and fasting and temptation in the wilderness, to battle with all the manifold devices and assaults of Satan all life long, and to set His Face steadfastly to go up to Jerusalem, knowing perfectly all that should befall Him there. It was Love which led Him to drain the cup of sorrow and of suffering to its very dregs, to hide not His Face from shame and spitting, to give His Back to the smiters and to them that plucked off the

hair, and to give Himself up to die upon the Cross !  
“ Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” His Love for man led Him to taste the full bitterness of Death, that henceforth His servants might not know it ; but that Death should be robbed of its terror and its sting. His Love pitied us in our low estate, and He came forth on that errand of infinite mercy, to seek and to save that which was lost. His Love is pure, disinterested, unselfish, utterly void of ambition. He loved mankind in his misery and sin, with a strange yearning over the creature He had made, a mighty longing to rescue and deliver him. And now on His Glory Throne His Heart craves thy love in return for His boundless Love, and He seems to say to each one of us, “ My son ! My daughter ! I have done all this for love of thee, what doest thou for Me ? ” Shall we not be drawn nearer and nearer unto God with the cords of a Man, with the bands of the Love of Christ ? Shall not His deep o’ermastering Love break down all obstacles, dispel all illusions, drive away all fears, kindle our hard, cold hearts into earnest warmth and love ? and so, utterly constrain us to yield unto Him our whole hearts, saying—

“ Take my poor heart, and let it be  
For ever closed to all but Thee ! ”

Aye! and to render unto Him the homage of our lives, striving to do all our works in Love, and ever praying—

“Jesu, my Lord, I Thee adore,  
O make me love Thee more and more!”

II. *To know the Love of Christ which passeth knowledge.* Yes! this is the science of all saints. This is the only knowledge which puffeth not up, but is wholly edifying—the love of JESUS our Lord. Once again then, “Behold the Man!” in Love, and see how boundless and infinite it is! Many waters cannot quench this Love of JESUS for the souls of men, neither can the floods of ungodliness drown it; for *to know* the length and breadth and depth and height of *the Love of Christ* is that *which passeth knowledge*. “It is as high as Heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know?”

“For the love of God is broader  
Than the measures of man's mind;  
And the Heart of the Eternal  
Is most wonderfully kind!”

It is this Love of JESUS our Lord which espied Nathaniel under the fig tree, and Zacchæus in the sycamore tree; which called S. Peter from his boats and nets, and S. Matthew from the toll-booth, to follow Him; which caused Him to have compassion

on the multitudes, to receive sinners and eat with them, to take the little children in His arms, lay His Hands upon them and bless them ; which constrained S. Mary Magdalen to stand behind Him weeping, and S. Mary of Bethany to sit at His feet and hear His words ; which caused Him to weep over Jerusalem in the hour of His triumph ; which recalled S. Peter with a look after his threefold denial of his Lord ; which converted the robber who hung beside Him on the Cross ; which caused the centurion to witness that good confession at His death ; which constrained the holy women to visit the sepulchre very early in the morning at the rising of the sun, and which caused SS. Peter and John to run together thither. It was Love which caused our dear Redeemer, as He hung upon the Cross, to pray for His murderers, to commend His mother unto the care of His disciple, and to resign His soul into His Father's Hands.

It is this long-suffering Love of JESUS which bears with us in spite of our coldness, carelessness, rebellion, ingratitude, and disobedience ; which goeth after the lost sheep until it finds and restores him to the Fold ; which heals our backsliding, which watches over every step of our life, and accompanies us from the cradle to the grave. There is no place on this side of the grave where the Love of JESUS does not enter and seek us

out, to plead with and if it may be, to lead us in the narrow way, the way of His peace. There is not a child of Adam who has not a share in this Love, none so poor, so despised, so wretched, so degraded, as to be shut out from the heart of JESUS our Lord, or to be beyond the reach of His dear Love.

Then why, O Blessed JESUS Christ  
Should I not love Thee well?  
Not for the hope of winning Heaven  
Or of escaping Hell :  
Not with the hope of gaining aught  
Nor seeking a reward,  
But as Thyself hast loved me  
O ever-loving Lord !

III. *To know the Love of Christ.* The Love of JESUS our Lord is no mere passing excitement. It is a firm principle, a strong and enduring passion for the souls of men. For "Love is strong as Death," and so we read that "having loved His own which were in the world He loved them unto the end." It is that strong, enduring, forbearing, and compassionating Love which has put up with our manifold sins, negligences, and ignorances, which has borne with our waywardness and self-will, which has withheld us from being cut off in the midst of our days, and has brought us to the present hour, and which has caused the Lord of all to knock so patiently and persistently at our heart's door.

Brethren ! shall we grieve this mighty Love of Christ our Lord, Who even now is seeking His sheep and searching them out ? shall we by our words and deeds and wilful ways declare ourselves utterly indifferent to His Love ? shall we throw off its restraints, cast in our lot with His enemies, or deny that Love which has been manifested towards us in ten thousand ways, by saying with His rebellious people of old "Wherein hast Thou loved us ?" Nay ! verily, it must not, it shall not be ! Rather we will satisfy the cravings of our own heart, the innermost longings of our spirit for Love and sympathy and mutual interchange of affection with the Love of JESUS ; for "the Love of JESUS what it is none but His loved ones know." Therefore let us pray

JESUS grant me this I pray  
Ever in Thy Heart to stay,  
Let me evermore abide  
In Thy Heart and wounded Side.

And as we pray so let us watch and work and wrestle and strive earnestly, day by day, that 'neither death, nor life, nor Angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature be able to separate us from the Love of God, which is in Christ JESUS our Lord.'

IV. *To know the Love of Christ which passeth*

*knowledge.* We have seen somewhat of our dear Lord's boundless Love, as displayed in His earthly life and death, and in His present dealings with mankind. We must also remember that He left us an example that we should follow in His steps, as He said "I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you." Love is the very atmosphere in which the soul must dwell, if it would live and thrive. "Love is the child of Faith, the mother of Obedience, the miniature likeness of God." And on the two feet of Love to God and love to man, we must make our journey onwards, upwards, heavenwards to our Home on high. We must love Him Who first loved us, with heart and mind and soul and strength, with pure hearts fervently, remembering that "he doeth much that loveth much," and then let us walk in love towards others, for "love is the leech of life," it smooths all roughnesses, it heals all wounds, "and this commandment have we from Him that he who loveth God love his brother also." "Love suffereth long and is kind ; Love envieth not ; Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its own, "(R.V.)" is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth with the truth ; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."

May we seek to know more and more of that Love

of JESUS our Lord which in all its fullness passeth knowledge. May we love Him Who is very Love itself, day by day unceasingly ; and may the exceeding great Love of our Master and only Saviour JESUS Christ constrain us to bring to Him the offering of a free heart, and to follow Him fully, as our Great Example in Love, Who is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever !

For O to love and be beloved by Thee  
Is the great mystery of felicity !

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## Our Blessed Lord as our Example in Obedience.

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HEB. v. 8.

“ Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things that He suffered.”

“ With loving hearts and footsteps slow,  
To Calvary with Christ we go.”

YES! we are now following all along the King's Highway of the Cross, and endeavouring to glean some ears of Heavenly corn after Him, our only Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST. Who went forth to sow in tears, but Who shall come again at the end of the world with joy, bringing His sheaves with Him.

As then, on the two preceding Sundays, ye have tried to pick up those ears of heavenly corn, *Self-Sacrifice* and *Love*, which our Blessed Lord let fall before our very eyes, what time He lived on earth and went in and out among us as a Man among men, to the end that we might glean and gather them up after Him, to our soul's health and comfort: so now would I ask you to gather up the golden grain of *Obedience*, which He drops for our example. And this naturally follows

next after Love, because *Obedience* is, as it were, the very test and proof of love, even as our dear Lord Himself said to His disciples, "If ye love Me, keep My commandments"; and they that do not obey God do not truly know God. True, there may be a certain obedience without love, even the servile obedience of fear; but there can be no love without obedience. It must follow as surely as when the sun shines objects cast their shadows.

Behold the Man Christ JESUS our Lord as our Guide and Pattern in Obedience.

*Though He were a Son yet learned He obedience by the things that He suffered.* For the "heir, as long as He is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father"; even so also the Heir of all things, Who took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, was disciplined, trained, instructed, and made perfect through sufferings. These were His tutors and teachers. He was permitted to suffer that He might learn *obedience*. And obedience to the Will of Him that sent Him, obedience to the Father, was one great rule, one of the guiding principles of our dear Lord's earthly life. When He cometh into the world, He saith, "Lo! I come to do Thy Will, O God!" "Yea!

Thy Law is within My heart," for "The law of Thy mouth is dearer unto Me than thousands of gold and silver." He was not that son who said unto His father, "I go, Sir," but went not : but like a loving Son He ever sought to obey His Father's Will, to do His Father's Work, to promote His Father's Honour. When found by His anxious, sorrowing Mother, after that three days' search, sitting in the midst of the doctors in the Temple, and when gently rebuked by her for His absence from her side, what was His reply? "Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?"

The loving earnestness and determination wherewith He cleansed the Temple caused His disciples to remember that it is written, "The zeal of Thine House hath eaten Me up." As He sat wearied with His journey on the well at Sychar, He forgot all His fatigues to minister to the soul of the woman of Samaria ; and when His disciples pressed Him to eat and take some refreshment, He declared to them, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of ;" "My meat is to do the Will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work." So intent was He upon carrying out the command of God, and rendering obedience unto the Father, that He esteemed the words of His mouth more than His necessary food. When preaching to

the Jews, He solemnly declared, "I seek not Mine own Will, but the Will of the Father which hath sent Me;" "I came down from Heaven, not to do Mine own Will, but the Will of Him that sent Me." And in His High Priestly Prayer after the Last Supper, we hear Him saying unto the Father, "I have glorified Thee on the earth, I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do. . . I have manifested Thy Name unto the men which Thou gavest Me out of the world."

II. *Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered.* Suffering was the school in which our dear Lord, the Man of Sorrows, learnt that perfect *obedience* which is more pleasing unto God than whole burnt offering and sacrifice. Toil and weariness ; hunger and thirst ; the fatigues of His long journeys taken on foot ; the sharpness of the Cross, which entered into His soul long before it touched His Sacred Body ; the fierce hatred of His enemies ; the indifference and fickleness of the multitude ; the dulness and slowness of apprehension in His disciples ; the treachery of one apostle, the three-fold denial of another, and the desertion of all ; the cruelty of the rough soldiers, the spitefulness of the proud Pharisees, the manifold assaults of Satan, all combined to teach Him obedience. And see how our

dear Lord's holy obedience was manifested in His life of poverty, and suffering, and self-denial; in His flight into Egypt; in His taking up His abode in Nazareth; in His becoming subject unto His earthly parents; in His passing by far the greater portion of His Life on earth in complete obscurity; in associating with the simple and needy; in choosing the humble and poor to be His Apostles, to hear His Word, to learn His Will, and to declare it to the world, even as He said, 'I thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes, even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight.' See how His obedience unto the Father was manifested in that holy self-restraint which He imposed upon Himself both in saying and doing, because His time, His hour, was not yet come. See how He shewed His obedience unto God in the fulfilment of prophecy, not doing His own ways, nor finding His own pleasure, nor speaking His own words, nor following His natural inclinations as Man, but simply doing this or that, that He might keep the commands of God, and that the Scripture might be fulfilled. Listen to His Words when seized by the soldiers, "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He shall presently give Me more than twelve

legions of angels ? But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled that thus it must be ?” See how He was obedient to the law for man, that He might leave us a perfect example of holy obedience, and that as by the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the obedience of the One the many might be made righteous. He showed His obedience by submitting to the rite of circumcision ; by going up to the Temple at twelve years of age and being catechised by the Jewish doctors ; by using fasting, which was expressly enjoined upon the Jews on the great day of Atonement ; by allowing Himself to be baptized by His own servant, S. John the Baptist ; by paying the tribute money, and even working a miracle to find the half shekel, the coin in which it was paid ; by observing the appointed Feasts and Fasts of the Jewish Church ; by constantly resorting unto God’s earthly House, the Temple at Jerusalem ; and by becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross. It may truly be said of Him, our true Joshua, “ He left nothing undone of all that the Lord commanded” ; for not until He had offered up Himself as a whole burnt offering, a Lamb without spot, to God, did He say, “ It is finished !” and that Pattern Life of obedience was ended.

III. Again, notice that our dear Lord’s *obedience* was

perfect in three ways, *i.e.* to say, (i.) It was willing and cheerful, the glad obedience of a loving heart delighting to do the Father's Will, and causing Him to bear witness by a voice from Heaven, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased." (ii.) It was unhesitating and unwavering. There was no flinching from the post of danger, no shrinking from difficulties, no drawing back, "He steadfastly set His Face to go to Jerusalem" to suffer and to die. And when upon the Cross, He, our true "Joshua, drew not His Hand back wherewith He stretched out the spear, until He had utterly" conquered Satan. (iii.) Our dear Lord's obedience was thorough. He kept all the commands of God. He offended not in one point. He stood perfect and complete in all the Will of God, so that He could say, "The Prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in Me."

iv. *Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered.* If suffering was the teacher which instructed our Blessed Lord in obedience, then surely was it not a life-long lesson, seeing that He died a suffering death? And as with the Master, so with the servant, obedience is a lesson which we must be learning from day to day, all life long. It is no easy lesson, but it is necessary and it is blessed. For "though obedience cannot merit Hea-

ven, yet it does qualify and fit us for Heaven ; though it does not make us worthy, yet doth it make us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light !” In the sight of Him with Whom we have to do, “Obedience is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.” And by the very circumstances of life, the positions in which He places us, God would fain bend and discipline our stubborn wills, and teach us obedience. “For vain man would be wise, though man be born like a wild ass’s colt ;” hence God commands obedience unto others that we may learn obedience and submission to Himself. There is no man upon earth that is exempt from this great duty of obedience ; for even kings and emperors who have no earthly superior, are bound to render obedience unto law, and to the claims of duty, that they may be the better able to render obedience unto the King of kings. Hence it is that the Scripture saith, “Children, obey your parents in the Lord ; for this is right ;” “Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters . . . as the servants of Christ, doing the Will of God from the heart ;” “Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord ;” and again, “Obey them that have the rule over you, for they watch for your souls,” and “let every soul be subject unto the higher powers, for there is



no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God." Let us regard obedience unto our fellow men as a duty laid upon us by God, intended to discipline our wills, and to help us on towards the entire conquest of self, and the "casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God," and the "bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ"! Though we can only follow our dear Lord afar off, and with faltering steps, still let us strive to imitate Him in His perfect obedience. Let us determine "I will hearken what God the Lord shall say concerning me," and enquire "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" Let us pray "Teach me to do Thy Will," "Father, not as I will, but as Thou wilt," "Thy Will be done in earth as it is in Heaven." Let us empty ourselves of self,—place ourselves unreservedly in God's Hands, to be, to do, to go, to suffer, as, and when, and how He sees best. Let us bend our stubborn wills to God's all holy Will, and learn *obedience*; for His Will is our peace, and His service is perfect freedom. And remember that as a rule men will give time, strength, money, influence, self-sacrifice unto God—all, and everything else—before they will surrender unto Him their *will*. It is the last best gift, without

which the others are of little value in His sight.

My brother! my sister! as thou hast begun to war a good warfare, go on unto perfection ; render unto the King Eternal, Immortal, Invisible, true allegiance and ready obedience ; sacrifice thy will, and offer it wholly unto Him on the altar of thine heart.

All round the rolling year, both night and day,  
A ceaseless voice ascends from those who pray  
Thy Will be done on earth as now in Heaven,  
Unto our souls a perfect choice be given.  
All round the rolling world, both night and day,  
A ceaseless answer comes to those who pray :  
By shattered hopes, crossed plans and fruitless pains  
Thy Heavenly Master thine allegiance claims.

\* \* \* \* \*

All is fulfilling, all is working still .  
To teach thee flexibility of will.  
To great achievements let thy wishes soar,  
Yet meek submission pleases Christ still more.  
When life's long discipline is over-past,  
Thy will too shall be done with His at last,  
When all is perfected, and thou dost stand  
Robed, crowned, and glorified at His Right Hand !

## Our Blessed Lord as our Example in Patience.

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PSALM IX. 18.

“The patient abiding of the Meek shall not perish for ever.”  
[P. Bk. Vers.]

OF JESUS our Lord no doubt this is written : for as He excelled all other men in *Self-sacrifice*, in *Love*, and in *Obedience*, as too He left us an example that we should follow in His steps in this grace of *Patience* also. And so our text saith, *The patient abiding of the Meek shall not perish for ever*; because wherever His Gospel is preached throughout the world, there also what things He patiently endured for us men and for our salvation, is told, and all men do marvel at His wondrous patience. Yes! our dear Lord, the Second Adam, is that Poor, and Meek, and Patient One, of Whom the prophet spake, “He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He is brought as a Lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth.” He it is of Whom S. Peter writes, “He did

no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth ; when He was reviled He reviled not again ; when He suffered He threatened not ; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously." He is expressly spoken of as *the Lamb of God*, because of His meekness and *patience* ; whilst further, upon Him the Holy Ghost descended like a *dove*, filling Him to overflowing with the graces of love and gentleness. *The patient abiding of the Meek*. Notice that it is not the poverty of the meek, nor the labour of the meek, nor the afflictions of the meek, but *the patient abiding*. For this is the grace which is dearest of all in God's sight. This is that which is the crown and perfection of all other graces. And as He said Himself so we also, altering but one word, may say of the Lord, There is none *patient* save One, that is God ; yea ! this grace is so rare and so hard to come by, that we may safely assert there is none truly meek save Him Who taught us, saying, "Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart ; and ye shall find rest unto your souls." He, our dear Lord, is the true Moses, Who was meek above all the men that were on the face of the earth. He, the true Job, of Whom we have heard in time past as an example of suffering affliction and of patience, but of Whom we seem to learn more year by year as we make our annual pilgrimage to Jerusalem, to stand by His Cross, and to

gaze upon the mysteries of His Passion and Redeeming Love. Let us behold the Man Christ JESUS our Lord to night in His patience.

1. *The patient abiding of the Meek.* Oh ! brethren, shall we not wonder at and adore the marvellous patience of JESUS our Lord, especially when we remember our own natural eagerness and impatience ? We see, it may be, some wrong or great injustice, and our blood runs faster, our indignation is aroused, and we are at once impatient to redress the wrong, and set things right upon the spot ! Or we have some new work given us to do, and we are eager to begin it, and want to finish it right off at once. Or we have done some work, it may even be some really good work for God, for our brethren, or for our own souls, and forthwith we become impatient to see the fruits, the results. But behold your God, the Man Christ JESUS, and marvel at His patience. For this surely is one of those things which the angels desire to look into : when they see the Lord, the Creator of all things, Who had only to speak and it was done, to command and it stood fast, tarrying the Lord's leisure, and at each step of His earthly Life patiently abiding until ' His hour '—the set time appointed in the Providence of God—was fully come. He had bowed the heavens and come down ; He had dwelt in the thick darkness ;

He had abhorred not the Virgin's womb, but had humbled Himself, and taken upon Him the Form of a Servant : and yet—instead of beginning His public ministry at once—He waits in obscurity, He tarries in seclusion, He patiently abides at Nazareth until He begins to be about thirty years of age. From the time of the return of the Holy Family out of Egypt until the day in which our Blessed Lord was baptized in Jordan, anointed with the Holy Ghost, Which descended upon Him in a bodily shape like a Dove, and borne witness unto by the Voice of the Father sounding out of Heaven—during those long years of preparation, we know next to nothing of our Blessed Lord's home life at Nazareth. Once only is the veil lifted, and we are permitted to see Him as a Boy, twelve years of age, in the Temple at Jerusalem, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions. And then back He goes to Nazareth, to obey and serve His earthly parents, and to bide His time, the day of His shewing unto Israel on the banks of Jordan. The world rolls on unconscious of its Saviour and Deliverer, and in the deep seclusion of the little village among the hills of Galilee, He sitteth alone and keepeth silence, tarrying the Lord's leisure, possessing His soul in *patience*, patiently abiding in the Lord, and waiting in quietness

and peace for the coming of that time when He should enter upon His Work.

2. *The patient abiding of the Meek.* Again, see our dear Lord's patience with His disciples. See how He bore with their ignorance and misconceptions, their slowness to believe His words, their dulness of comprehension, the imperfect way in which they took in what He said to them, the very slow and gradual way in which they began to realize the nature of His Person and His Work. SS. James and John, the sons of Zebedee, requested to be allowed to sit on His Right Hand and on His Left, in His Kingdom, which they regarded as an earthly Sovereignty shortly to be established at Jerusalem. S. Philip asked to be shown the Father: not understanding that Christ our Lord is the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His Person, and that He who hath seen Him hath seen the Father. SS. James and John would have called down fire from Heaven to avenge an insult offered to their Master: forgetting that He had come to save men's lives, and not to destroy them. When first he heard of our Blessed Lord's intended sufferings and death at Jerusalem, S. Peter took Him and began to rebuke Him: so little did he understand the purpose of our Blessed Lord's Mission. His disciples disputed for place and precedence when

they reasoned amongst themselves which should be the greatest. They interfered with His Work, as when they would have prevented the little children from coming unto Him to receive His blessing, and begged Him to send the Syrophenician woman away because she was crying after them. They forgot the miracles of the loaves, feared that even with Him on board they must all go to the bottom in the storm; and understood not what He said to them about Lazarus sleeping. S. Peter denied Him; they all forsook Him and fled; S. Thomas doubted at first of the reality of His Resurrection. Yet how patiently did He bear with all their ignorance, their mistakes, their dulness and slowness of heart—things which often irritate and try our patience more than intentional opposition and wilful disobedience! He led them gently on, in His patience, and instructed them gradually, precept upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little, there a little, as they were able to bear it.

3. Again, behold *the patient abiding of the Meek* in enduring the contradiction of sinners against Himself. When the Samaritans of a certain village would not give Him lodging for the night, because His Face was set as though He would go to Jerusalem, He simply passed on, and went to another village. When the



very people whom He had benefited returned hatred for His goodwill, when they ascribed His Works of love and mercy to the power of the Devil, when they misinterpreted His sayings, when they watched His steps and laid wait for His soul, when they put artful and ensnaring questions to Him that they might catch something out of His mouth—then how patiently He bore it, never growing angry, or cross, or impatient ; but taking everything so meekly and quietly, answering so wisely ; and seeking the good of His very enemies in love.


4. Wonder at His marvellous patience with His enemies. When roughly seized and led away He patiently abides, thinking of others rather than of Himself, and so quietly saying, “Suffer ye thus far,” He touches the ear of Malchus and heals it. At His examination before the High Priest, when false witnesses rose up and laid to His charge things that He knew not, to the great discomfort of His soul, there was no fierce and indignant repudiation of the charge, but He was simply silent—“As a sheep before her shearers was dumb, so He opened not His mouth.” So, too, when before Pontius Pilate, the Governor, the Chief Priests accused Him of many things He answered never a word, so that the Governor greatly marvelled. When mocked, insulted, beaten, spit upon, falsely

condemned, scourged, and led away to Crucifixion, how patient was He, "when He was reviled He reviled not again, when He suffered He threatened not."

5. Behold, and wonder at *the patient abiding of the Meek* under His aggravated sufferings! When nailed to the Cross He prays for His murderers, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do"—when mocked by the chief priests and scribes, jeered at by the passers by, reviled by the impenitent robber, and grossly insulted by the soldiers, in His patience He possesses His soul, and answers nothing!

Once more, see our dear Lord's *patient abiding* in tarrying three days in the grave before rising triumphant from the dead—in shewing Himself after His Resurrection only to His disciples, and not to all the people, content to bide His time, and wait awhile, for the ingathering of the nations—and in tarrying for forty days on earth after His Resurrection, instead of returning at once in triumph to the Right Hand of God. Behold and wonder and adore His *Patience*, and may God give us each His Grace, that we may follow in Christ's steps in meekness and patience!

Patience is the very ballast of the soul—the salve for every wound—the crown of all other virtues. "It's easy finding reasons why other folks should be patient;" but it is hard to learn to be patient our-



selves. But we have need of patience, that after we have done the Will of God we might inherit the promises ; for “ the patient man will bear for a time, and afterwards joy shall spring up unto him.” And it is a virtue that comes not to us naturally, or at the beginning of our Christian course ; but which requires much effort on our part to attain unto, and which can only be learnt in the school of JESUS Christ, “ For tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope.” Let patience then have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. Hear what an ancient father of the Church saith concerning this great and blessed gift of Patience, so pleasing unto God, so needful for ourselves : “ God is an abundantly sufficient depository of Patience. If thou placest a wrong in His Hands, He is an Avenger : if a loss, He is a Restorer : if pain, He is a Physician : if death, He is the Resurrection. Patience observeth all His pleasure, she interposeth her aid in all His commands. She fortieth faith, guideth peace, assisteth charity, waiteth for penitence, setteth her mark upon confession, ruleth the flesh, preserveth the spirit, bridleth the tongue, restraineth the hand, treadeth temptations under foot, driveth away offences, perfecteth martyrdoms, consoleth the poor, ordereth the rich, straineth not the

weak, wasteth not the strong, delighteth the believer, inviteth the heathen, commendeth the servant to his master, his master to God ; adorneth the woman, approveth the man ; is loved in the boy, praised in the young man, respected in the old, is beautiful in every sex, in every age." Brethren ! let us seek this grace of Patience and pursue it. Let us strive to become followers of those who through Faith and Patience now inherit the promises ; let us share with them in the Kingdom and Patience of JESUS Christ. Let us behold our dear Lord in His Patience, and learn from *the patient abiding* of that Meek One to take suffering, trouble, worry, the contempt of the world, the unkindness and rudeness of others, mistakes concerning our motives, our plans, our deeds, slanders, ingratitude, the thwarting of our hopes and cherished schemes, the crossing of our wills, the very failure of our efforts—let us learn, I say, to bear each and all of these calmly, quietly, humbly, and patiently, ever praying :

"Grant Thou this Patience, O JESU, to me,  
Grant Thou Thy Graces, my safeguard to be,  
So that in all things Thy Will may be mine,  
Bearing all troubles because they are Thine.  
Still let me study like Thee to appear,  
Still let me seek to be crucified here :  
That if my anguish, like Thine, is increased,  
I may sit also with Thee at Thy Feast."

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## Our Blessed Lord as our Example in Work.

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S. JOHN IX. 4.

"I must work the works of Him that sent Me while it is day; the night cometh when no man can work."

Already have we seen our Blessed Lord uplifted before our very eyes, and constraining us to take Him as our Pattern and our Guide in Self-Sacrifice, in Love, in Obedience, and in Patience. To-night let us behold the Man Christ JESUS our Lord in *His Work*.

1. And what was that great and marvellous *Work* which was given Him to do? His wondrous works which ought to be had in remembrance, include His Incarnation, or taking of our flesh, His Nativity at Bethlehem, His Fasting and Temptation in the Wilderness, His Agony in the Garden, His long Passion, from the time He was seized and bound until that moment in which He bowed His sacred Head upon the Cross and gave up the Ghost, His Resurrection, His Ascension from the Mount of Olives, and His sending of the Holy Ghost. But what was that, His Work, His Father's business, which was entrusted

Him to do? He came to repair the ruin wrought by Adam's sin, to undo the mischief caused by Satan, and to ransom the prisoners out of the hand of the enemy. He came—to seek and to save that which was lost; to pluck mankind like brands from the burning; to bridge over the ever-widening gulf between man and his justly offended Lord God; to bring man back to God; and to make reconciliation for the transgressors. He came—to preach the Gospel to the poor; to heal the broken-hearted; to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. He came—"to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness." He came—to bear our griefs, to carry our sorrows, to be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and to heal our sicknesses. He came to offer Himself as a Lamb without spot to God upon the Altar of the Cross; to bear our sins in His own Body on the Tree; to atone for the sins of the whole human race; to blot out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us; to conquer sin and Satan; to bruise the serpent's head; to rob death of its sting, and the grave of its victory; to open the Kingdom of Heaven to all

believers ; and to leave us an example that we should follow in His steps. The *work* given unto our Blessed Lord to do was to be our Prophet, Priest, and King ; and as our *Prophet*, to preach the Gospel, the glad tidings of great joy; the good news, even the message of salvation, from the far country of our heavenly home ; as our *Priest*, to offer Himself as the One Sacrifice for sins for ever, upon the Altar of the Cross ; as our *King*, to gather all things unto Himself, to set up His Throne within our hearts, and to rule our lives. His *Work* was to be to us the Good Samaritan, to have compassion upon mankind, robbed and stripped and wounded by Satan, to bind up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and to bring him to the Inn of His Church, to be cared for and healed. His work was to be the Great Physician, healing all manner of sickness and disease, whether of body or soul ; to be the Good Shepherd, leading forth His sheep, calling them all by their names, feeding them in the green pastures, beside the still waters, and giving His Life for the sheep. When we consider our Blessed Lord's Life and Work, may we not well exclaim, "Great things are they that Thou hast done, O God, Who is like unto Thee," "glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders"? "O that men would therefore praise the Lord for His goodness,

and declare the wonders that He doeth for the children of men !

2. *I must work the works of Him that sent Me while it is day.* See how our Blessed Lord began, continued, and ended, that work which was given Him to do : How He *began* it in obedience to the Father, Who sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world, and in love toward man ; continued it in diligence, energy, and faith ; ended it in patient perseverance. How vast and grand was our Blessed Lord's Divine conception of that His Work. At a single glance He took in its necessity and importance, for without it not one single soul could ever have hoped to pass the gates of Paradise, far less to enter Heaven. He perceived its *difficulty*, how Satan, the strong man armed, would gather together all his forces, and oppose Him tooth and nail at every step ; how He would come unto His own, and they would not receive, but deny Him in the presence of Pontius Pilate when he would be minded to let Him go ; and how mankind in general would receive His offers of help and mercy ; in too many cases with half-hearted indifference, if not with cool contempt or uttermost disdain, or would reward Him for all His benefits with ingratitude, neglect, and disregard, or would run well for a little time, and then fall away again into the world ; and how His faithful



ones would be but a little flock, persecuted by the world and everywhere spoken against. He took in the *manysidedness* of His Work, with all its varying lights and shadows, at one glance ; and thus foresaw the struggles, failures, trials, tears, success or otherwise, of every individual soul that ever should be born into this world until the end of time—and yet, vast as was the work of loving, seeking, helping, caring for, guiding, and dying on behalf of such millions upon millions, beyond all count, He shrank not from it, nor was discouraged.

3. *I must work the works of Him that sent Me.* See how our Blessed Lord regarded His work as something given and entrusted unto Him, by the Father, to do for Him. It was His Father's business. As He said, "the works which the Father hath given Me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of Me, that the Father hath sent Me"; and again, "The Father that dwelleth in Me He doeth the works." And so, again, "The words that I speak unto you I speak not of Myself," "and the word which ye hear is not Mine, but the Father's which sent Me," "for He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God ;" "I have not spoken of Myself, but the Father which sent Me He gave Me a commandment what I should say and what I should speak." Hence all His

works were "wrought in God"—done with a single eye to His glory, performed as the carrying out of His purpose, His good pleasure, and His Will. Hence, how pure, how disinterested, how unselfish were the *motives*, which underlay and prompted our dear Lord to the fulfilment of His Work. His motives were obedience unto the Father, and love and pity for mankind. There was no self-seeking, no striving for effect, no love of honour, no craving for approbation or applause, but a simple, burning desire to save mankind, and to do the Will of God, as He declared again and again, "Lo! I come to do Thy Will, O God," "I delight to do Thy Will, O My God," "I seek not Mine own Will, but the Will of the Father Which hath sent Me;" *I must work the works of Him that sent Me while it is day*; "I have a Baptism to be baptized with. and how am I straitened till it be accomplished." Watch our Blessed Lord at Work, and see His Work *in execution*. How patiently, how persistently, how nobly, He works, how unsparing of Himself is He—how resolute in carrying out the great work of saving a lost and ruined race. He works with His hands, with His feet, with His heart, with His head. As a Boy He is found in the Temple about His Father's business—as a youth He tarries patiently in His home at Nazareth, preparing to enter upon His Work. And when once

His public ministry has begun, how ceaselessly He works, journeying on foot from place to place throughout Galilee and Judæa, constantly going about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil, teaching and preaching, healing the sick, and compassionating all. He works to weariness, so that He sits down on the broad stone coping of the well's mouth, and falls asleep on the boat pillow from exhaustion and fatigue, He is so pressed with engagements of various kinds, and with constant demands upon His time, that at one period, the sacred evangelist tells us, He and His disciples "had no leisure so much as to eat." No sooner is one work finished, or even before it is completed, than He is called to another. One duty treads upon another, like that crowd who waited upon Him, eagerly drinking in the words of Him Who spake as never man spake. He is at the beck and call of every poor, sick, and helpless creature, who cries to Him in sincerity and faith : He casts none out, He turns none away, but ever cries, " Whosoever cometh unto ME I will in no wise cast out !" He craves to do the work set before Him. It is, as it were, His very meat and drink, for which He is hungry and is thirsty, as He said, " My meat is to do the Will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His Work." He feels straitened until it is accomplished.

See how *perfectly* and *thoroughly* He works. It is His Father's Work, to be done as well as possible. Hence He doth it not by halves, but with His whole heart. None of *His* Work ever needed to be done over again; it was finished and complete. His cures were thorough. His *Work* is perfect. Again, how resolutely and unflinchingly He works. Knowing all that He should suffer, He shrank not from the Work of our Redemption, but vouchsafed to become Man. "Seeing all His own mischance," all the sufferings, mockings, blows, insults, blasphemies, the scourging, the desertion of His own, the reviling and cruelty of others, that should come upon Him, He nevertheless steadily set His Face to go up to Jerusalem. He felt, *I must work the works of Him that sent Me while it is day*, and therefore, for the joy before Him, He endured the Cross, despising the shame, and worked steadily on, until He could say, "It is finished!" "I have finished the Work which Thou gavest Me to do." And shall not we, brethren, take these words of our text, *I must work the works of Him that sent Me while it is day: the night cometh wherein no man can work*—Shall we not take them for our own life motto? Let us take our Blessed Lord as our Pattern and our Guide, and imitate His singleness of aim and steady purpose, His diligence, patience, thoroughness,

in all His Work. Whatever be our station, whatever our employment, let us do our work, whether of the hands or of the head, which God hath given us to do, "as unto the Lord, and not unto men." Let us work as in God's sight, and for His sake. Remember, "God looks to the quality of work done, not to the quantity of it. And whatever is worth doing at all is worth doing well." Therefore, "whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." A good solid bit of work lasts, and some one is the better for it, besides the man that does it. Whilst no one can tell what harm and misery, what mischief and confusion, may result from work being scamped or carelessly performed, from duties being neglected, or carelessly hurried over, from bad material or bad workmanship being allowed to pass. A shipwright puts a bad piece of wood into a new vessel. "What does it matter, no one will be the wiser?" But one day the brave ship is caught in a storm, one defective timber yields to the strain, and she springs a leak. The crew man the pumps, and do their best to keep it under, but the water gains upon them : it increases fast : now all hope is gone : that ship is lost through one defective timber ! But why multiply instances of what we all know full well ? Bad work will, sooner or later, bring harm and trouble to someone : and, as with a stone

that is flung, when once it has left the hand, you know not where it may fall ; so too with duties neglected, work ill done, or bad material used, you know not who may be hurt by it, and possibly the mischief may recoil upon yourself. Let us work for God and for eternity by doing all our work as well as we possibly can. Let us work now that we may rest in eternity. For the more cheerfully we go about our lawful business, the nearer we come to our Paradise. The Psalmist prayed, "Shew Thy servants Thy Work, and their children Thy glory ;" and so should we. Results and success may well be left to those that come after : enough for us if God shew us the Work He would have us do, and give us strength and grace faithfully to fulfil the same. What He requires of us is diligence, not success. That will be as He sees fit.

"Work, O my brothers,  
Work and despair not,  
Think not and care not  
Aught of the issue ;  
Leave that in God's Hands."

And whilst we are "not slothful in business," let us also be "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." *The night cometh wherein no man can work* : therefore work while it is day. Give all diligence to make your calling and election sure ; work out your own salvation,

cleanse your hands and purify your hearts, feed your souls with the Bread of God; and be in downright earnest. Whilst waiting at the Deal Station the other day, I saw a workman engaged in repairing a first class carriage. He had but two tools, a can of oil and a hammer, and with these He worked away patiently and thoroughly until his work was finished. And I thought to myself, "Those are the very same tools which we all want for the work of life," oil and a hammer, the oil of God's grace, and the hammer of perseverance. Let us use the oil of Grace to feed the lamp within, and to smooth all roughnesses without, and then let us hammer away earnestly, lovingly, faithfully, perseveringly, even unto the end, saying—

"Death worketh,  
Let me work too;  
Death undoeth,  
Let me do.  
Busy as death my work I ply  
Till I rest in the rest of Eternity!"

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## **Our Blessed Lord as our Example in Death.**

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S. LUKE XXIII. 46.

“And when JESUS had cried with a loud voice, He said, Father, into Thy Hands I commend My spirit : and having said this, He gave up the ghost.”

SUNDAY after Sunday throughout this Lent, I have pointed you to our dear Lord, the Word made Flesh, and have endeavoured as far as words could do so, to uplift Him before your eyes as our One Great Pattern and Example in Self-Sacrifice, in Love, in Obedience, in Patience, and in Work. To-night I would carry on your thoughts a few days in advance, *i.e.*, from Palm Sunday to Good Friday, and thus by anticipation direct your gaze to Calvary itself. Yes, to-night with hushed voice and bated breath, I would point your eyes, your hearts, to that One Central Figure, lifted up upon the Cross, strained, and racked, and torn, and bleeding, and would say to every one of you, “Behold the Man” Christ JESUS our Lord in death, and learn from Him how to die ! And if it be a solemn thing to stand by the deathbed of one of our



fellow men, to watch the laboured breath, to note the ebbing pulse, to mark the death-sweat on the brow, to see the glazing eye, to strive to catch the last faint utterances—and then to be aware that the spirit has left the earthly house of this its tabernacle, and has returned to God who gave it. If, I say, it be a solemn and impressive thing to stand by the dying bed of one amongst ourselves: how much more solemn, more awful, more impressive is it, to take our stand beneath the Cross, and to behold JESUS our God dying for guilty man, the Good Shepherd, laying down His Life for us His sheep, our Blessed Saviour dying for a world of sinners ! Behold the Lord in Death !

“O sinner, lift the eye of Faith,  
To true repentance turning ;  
Bethink thee of the curse of sin,  
Its awful guilt discerning ;  
Upon the Crucified One look,  
And thou shalt learn as in a book,  
What well is worth thy learning.”

Yes ! brethren, behold your King reigning from the Tree. For that Cross which is the instrument of death, and which once was the Tree of shame, the sign and symbol of everything vile and degrading, is to JESUS our Lord His Royal Throne, from whence He distributes his largesse and bounty, pardon to His enemies, absolution and a place in Paradise to the

penitent robber, help and consolation to His Blessed Virgin Mother, and a most worthy Example to us all. And remember that it is Very *God* Who suffers, is mocked, scourged, crucified, and slain ! O wonder of wonders ! O mystery of mysteries ! O miracle of mercies ! He, Whom we see in the Agonies of Death giving His Life a ransom for many, and tasting of death for every man : He, Who cries with a loud voice, Who lovingly commits His soul into God's Hands, Who meekly bows His Head, and gives up the ghost, is *God*. Shall we not say, *My Lord and my God* !

"JESUS, my Lord, I Thee adore,  
O make me love Thee more and more ?"

1. Behold your God in the agonies of *Death* ! What heart can perfectly conceive, what tongue can fully utter, all the sufferings and distress of Body and of Mind which the Lord of all went through during those six long hours, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., when He hung adying : His Sacred Wounds smart and burn : His Body is strained and racked upon the Cross : a burning fever takes possession of His veins : His whole Body is out of joint :

"How fast His Hands and Feet are nailed ;  
His throat with parching thirst is dried ;  
His failing Eyes are dimmed with Blood :  
JESUS our Lord is crucified !"

Think, too, of the sense, the overwhelming sense, of the burden of the sins of the whole world ; how all the foul, black, and horrible sins of thought, of word, or of deed, that mankind ever have committed in the ages that are past, or shall commit until the end of time, were borne in upon His Heart and Mind. For He, the Pure, the Holy, and the Spotless One, bore our sins in His own Body on the Tree, and was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. But who may speak of that last drop of bitterness in the cup of mental suffering which He drained to its very dregs—the hiding of His Father's Countenance, which caused Him to exclaim, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" It is a subject so deep and so mysterious that I can only just allude to it and pass on. But though this hiding of God's Countenance from our Blessed Lord be a matter "as high as Heaven ; what canst thou do? deeper than Hell, what canst thou know?" yet did it cause our Blessed Lord very intense and real suffering. Again—see Him Who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil, Who healed the sick, Who raised the dead, and Who compassionated all, mocked in those His dying agonies by four classes—the priests and scribes ; the robbers, for at first Dymas on the right joined with Gesmas on

the left Hand of the Lord in their revilings ; the rough Roman soldiers ; the unsympathising passers by. He is become a Stranger unto His brethren, and an Alien unto His mother's children ; for He has come unto His own, and His own have not received Him, but have delivered Him unto the Gentiles, and have denied Him in the presence of Pontius Pilate when he was minded to let Him go. Again, see how nature herself testifies in a most unmistakeable way to the Death of her Creator and her God ! As at His Nativity, the Heavens were lighted up with a grand illumination, in token of great joy that the Desire of all nations had at length come ; as " the modest water saw its God, and blushed," at the marriage feast of Cana ; as the yielding waves hastened to become a firm and solid pavement under His Feet Who is Lord of all ; as

" The wild winds hushed ; the angry deep  
Sank, like a little child, to sleep ;  
The sullen billows ceased to leap  
At His Will ;"

when with a gesture of majesty and command, He said, " Peace ! be still ! " ; as the fig-tree dried up from the roots at His withering word ; and as the clouds shall form His triumphal chariot at His Ascension—so now the powers of Nature prove their sympathy,

and manifestly declare that they are "neither unheeding nor unsympathising spectators of the dying agonies of Him Who made them." The sun hides his countenance, and the moon veils her face, and the stars withdraw their shining ! There is a pall of gloom and darkness over all the land from the sixth to the ninth hour ; and when at last the Lord had cried with a loud voice, saying, " Father, into Thy Hands I commend My Spirit," and had given up the Ghost, when at length JESUS, the Lord of Life and Glory, hangs dead upon the Cross, then the earth trembles at the deed of guilty man, and by quaking, rends, as it were, her garments, in token of her grief, and sorrow, and distress, so that the Roman Centurion is compelled to acknowledge, "Truly this Man was the Son of God !" Yes ! it is God Who dies ! And He dies willingly and voluntarily, as He saith, "I lay down My life that I might take it again. No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." Behold your God in Death, for none but God could taste of death for every man ; none but He could conquer death in the act of dying, rob death of its sting, and the grave of its victory. "Death shot its sting into our Saviour's side ; and there left it, and there lost it." The Seed of the woman, the Word

made Flesh, has bruised the Serpent's Head, albeit in so doing His own Heel was bruised. The Lord of Life has conquered death by dying. By that one act He has wrought out our deliverance. By His Precious Death He has destroyed him that had the power of Death, that is, the devil; and has delivered those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. From the Cross, the Deathbed of the Lord, light, and life, and hope, have gone forth into all the world, and have changed burial grounds into cemeteries, (cemetery properly means "a sleeping chamber"), graves into beds, death into sleep; the Valley of Death into the Valley of the Shadow of Death, which has no real danger nor evil to those whom Death itself cannot separate from the Love of Christ JESUS our Lord.

But turn your gaze again unto that meek, and patient, yet majestic Sufferer, reigning from the Tree, and drawing all men unto Him. See how He dies, and learn therefrom how to meet thine own death. When uplifted on the Cross, His first thought is for others rather than for Himself, and He manifests His world-embracing Love and marvellous Charity by praying for His murderers, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do;" and learn to prepare for death by forgiving those who have in any way

wronged you. See the Lord's perfect patience and resignation during all those six hours that He was hanging on the Cross. He only spake seven times. And all that time no single murmur, nor complaint, nor groan, nor tear, nor sigh, escaped Him. So bear thy pain and sufferings humbly, patiently, and lovingly, joining *thy* pain to the sharpness of *His* Cross and Passion, and so suffering with Him, that hereafter thou mayest reign with Him. He speaks a word of pardon and of hope to the penitent, "Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise :—" so let the words spoken on thy deathbed be a help and comfort, not a hindrance, unto others. Then His filial care for His Blessed Mother leads Him to make provision for the comfort of her declining years, and He commends her to the care and keeping of S. John. So settle thy worldly affairs that those whom thou leavest behind thee may have no trouble. Then enemies, friends, relations, pass out of sight, as it were, and the Lord's whole heart, and mind, and soul, are fixed on God. The cry, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me ?" are wrung from Him by the hiding of the Father's Countenance ; and yet this bitter cry betokens utter trust, like that saying of holy Job, "Though He slay me, yet will I put my trust in Him !" So in thy soul's darkest hour, hold fast by

the pierced Hand of JESUS, trust in Him, and call upon His Name, and be not afraid. Next, He saith, "I thirst," not to complain of His own Sufferings, but that the words of prophecy might be fulfilled. So be ready to go to God by a long and lingering illness, or by a short, rough road, as He sees fit. Next, the word, "It is finished," implies a strong and resolute determination to fulfil God's Will even to the end. So do thou fulfil the appointed duties of thy station, work thy work, and serve thy generation according to the Will of God, that, when thou comest to die, thy work too may be finished.

*And when JESUS had cried with a loud voice, He said, Father, into Thy Hands I commend My Spirit, and having said this, He gave up the ghost.* Thus with loving confidence the Lord resigns His Human Soul into the Hands of Him that gave it. So also, knowing in Whom we have believed, that He is able to keep that which we have committed unto Him unto the day of God, and being assured that neither man nor devil can pluck us out of our Father's Hands, if we continue faithful unto Him, let us commit the keeping of our soul to Him as unto a faithful Creator, and let us often say, "Lord, into Thy Hands I commend my Spirit," that so if possible these words might be the last upon our lips be-



fore our spirit take its departure to the Paradise of God.

My brother ! my sister ! remember that God died for *thee*. He tasted the full bitterness of death that thou mightest not know it. He died for thee that thou mightest fall asleep. Look then upon Him Whom thy sins have pierced and slain, and learn from Him how to die. Death is the great end of this life. The one thing which happens to all alike, which levels all and is utterly impartial. Learn from the example of our dear Lord how to die *well*. Set the house of thy soul in order. Prepare to meet thy God at the hour of thy death. And when thy summons comes, "Arise thou and depart, for this is not thy rest," when thy Guardian Angel whispers in thine ear, "The Master is come and calleth for thee," then lovingly, trustfully, and joyfully commit thy soul into *His* Hands Who shall preserve thee from all evil, yea, Who shall ever keep thy soul ; and say, "Lord, into Thy Hands I commend my spirit," "I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me," "I will lay me down in peace and take my rest : for it is Thou, Lord, only that makest me dwell in safety." "The Eternal God is my Refuge, and underneath are the everlasting Arms."

"Pillow where lying  
Love rests its head,

Peace of the dying,  
Life of the dead ;  
Path of the lowly,  
Prize at the end,  
Breath of the Holy,  
Saviour and Friend !"

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**THE END.**









